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ABSTRACT

Small towns and rural places face numerous barriers to development. In response, the four Regional Rural Development Centers serve as regional and national networks to catalyze, initiate, facilitate, and evaluate research and educational programs that have potential to improve rural economic and social well-being. Such programs focus on developing skills and problem solving processes of individuals in small towns and rural places. This publication profiles the Centers' cooperative programs and those of each Center, focusing on five key issues for the 1990s: (1) improving economic competitiveness and diversification; (2) supporting management and strategic planning for economic investment; (3) creating capacity through leadership; (4) assisting in family and community adjustments to stress and change; and (5) promoting constructive use of the environment. These programs are concerned with economic development, community development, business development, tourism, recycling, natural resource management, attracting retirees, marketing, local public finance, accessing higher education resources, strategic community planning, rural service delivery, public policy education, consumer education, student attitudes toward economic development and outmigration, leadership training, youth leadership, relationship between rural education and rural development, poverty research, health care, youth problems and needs, parenting education, sustainable agriculture, and conservation. Contains photographs. (SV)

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ED 387 308

COMBINED REPORT

Selected Research and Extension Projects of the Four Regional Rural Development Centers

1994

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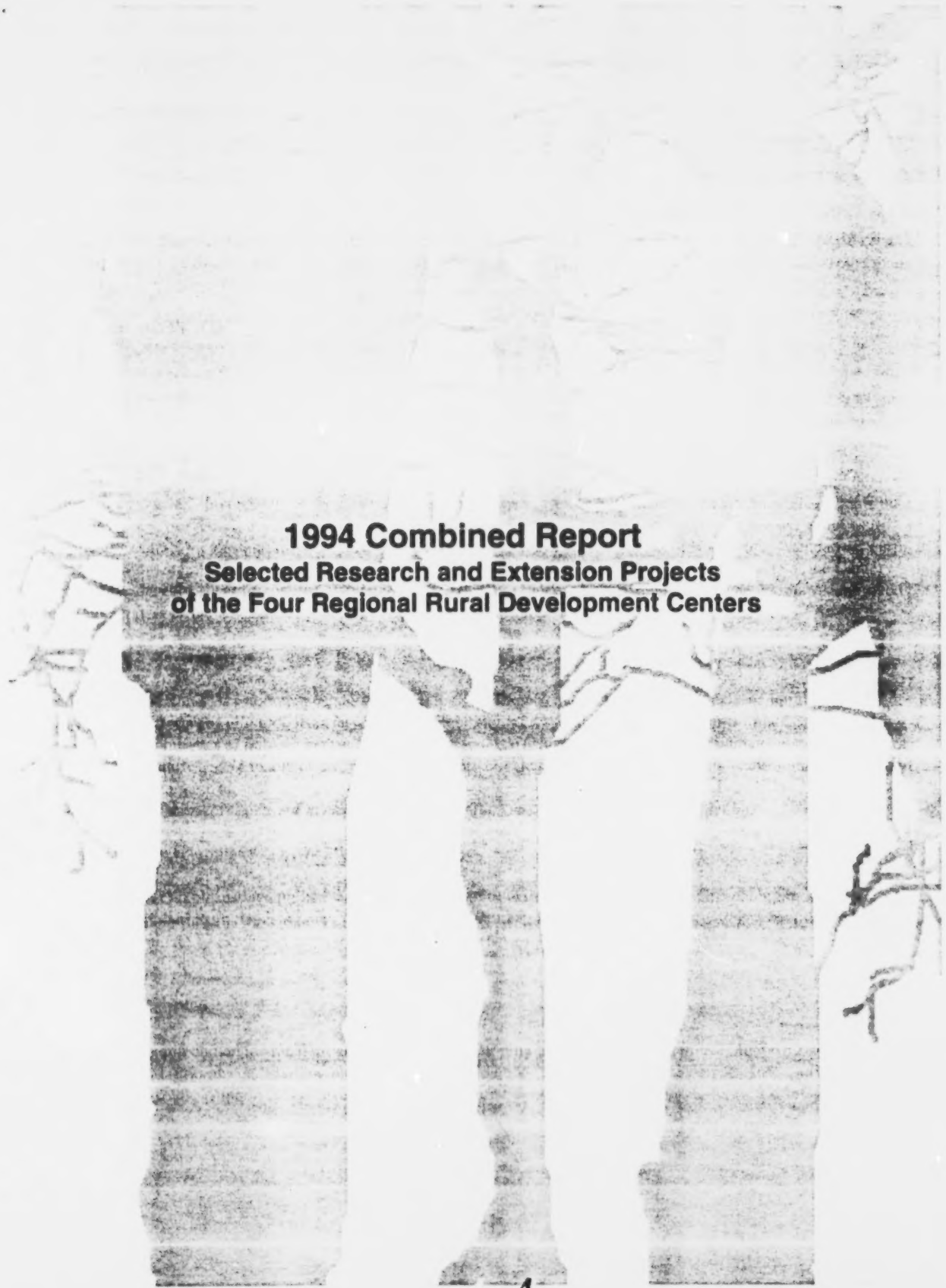
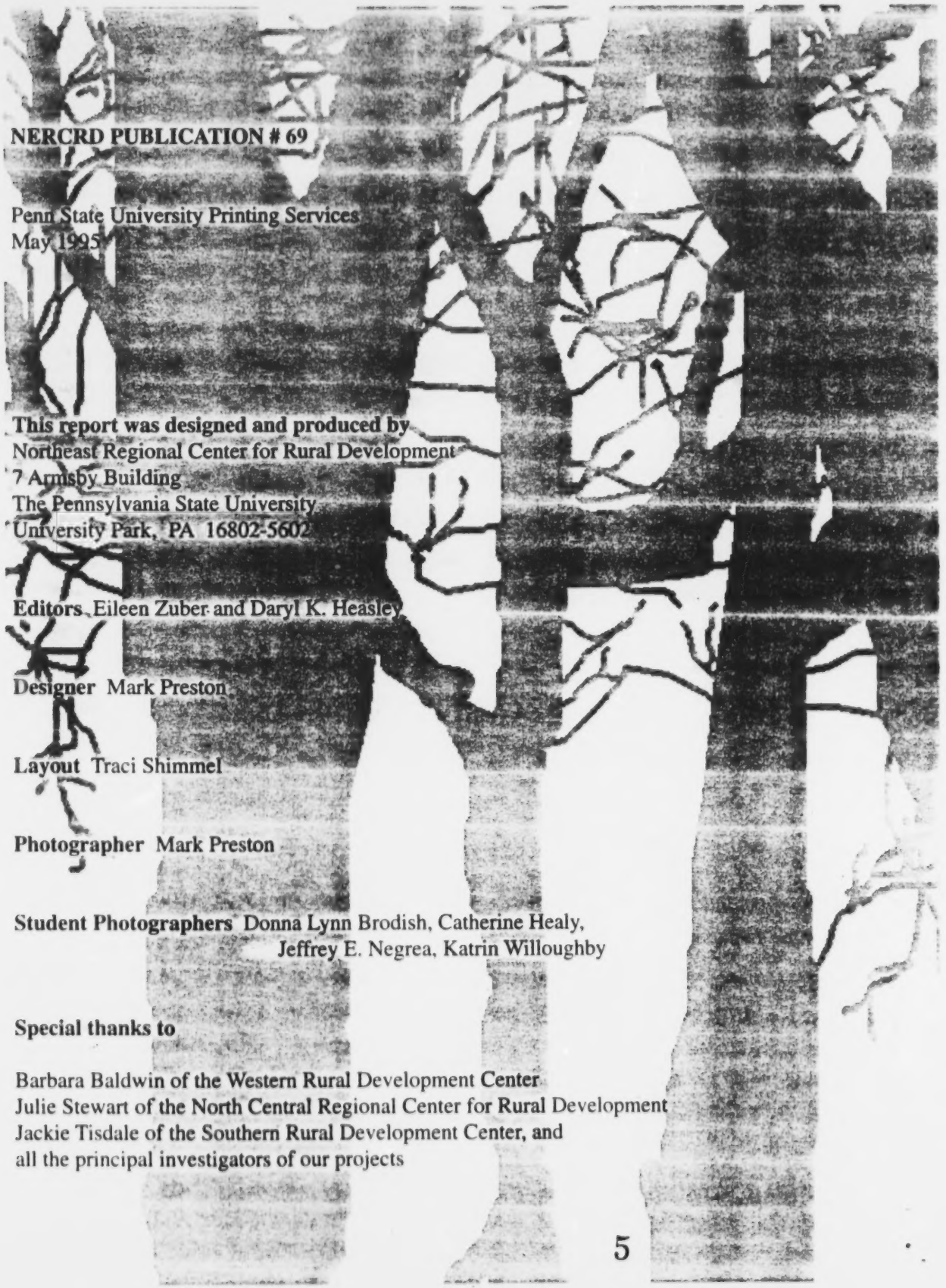
Programs of the Regional Rural Development Centers are available equally to all people.



1994 Combined Report

Selected Research and Extension Projects of the Four Regional Rural Development Centers



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Preface

This is a combined report of selected extension and research activities, projects, and accomplishments of the four Regional Rural Development Centers. The four Centers are linked to the land-grant institutions and seek to improve the social and economic well-being of rural people. The variety of projects and the diversity of people and organizations involved in the work of the Centers attest to the impact of their work and reveal how this work touches rural people and communities.

The Centers have two audiences for its services and products: the direct users and the end users. The direct users are the professionals conducting research and developing and delivering educational programs in the land-grant and other educational institutions and organizations. The end users, rural people and their communities, receive the benefits through the rural development research and education professionals of the land-grant and other educational institutions and organizations.

KEN WILKINSON

Dedication

Ken Wilkinson in his quiet, unassuming manner had an immeasurable impact on domestic and international rural development research and outreach during his distinguished career at Mississippi State University, USDA, and Penn State University. His early death left personal and professional voids first among his friends and colleagues, and second among the residents of small towns and rural places.

His first concern was always for people—whether colleagues or rural residents. His unique insights permitted Ken to synthesize theory, primary and secondary data, and personal experience in such manner that it was "user-friendly" for rural residents and admired and used by his colleagues. His ability to make sense of and champion small towns and rural places will be missed.

While Ken was a Rural Sociology faculty member at Penn State, he served on the initial Technical Advisory Committee which peer-reviews all proposals to the Center, played a major author role in responding to the request-for-proposal which was successful in re-locating the Center at Penn State, provided council advice to the Center staff, helped develop its first strategic plan, and championed all four Centers at the national review and especially at the Northeast Center follow-up on-site review.

We are better because of his scholarship, caring, and sharing. Thanks, Ken for all your help.

Daryl K. Heasley Doss Brodnax Russ C. Youmans Cornelia Butler Flora

Table of Contents

Preface v

Dedication vii

Introduction 1

Goal 1: To Improve Economic Competitiveness and Diversification Introduction 2
Current Projects Highlights
- Collobarative projects of the Regional Rural Development Centers 3
- North Central Regional Center for Rural Development 3
- Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development 4
- Southern Rural Development Center 5
- Western Rural Development Center 5

Completed Projects Highlights 6

Goal 2: To Support Management and Strategic Planning for Economic Investment Introduction 8
Current Projects Highlights
- Collobarative projects of the Regional Rural Development Centers 9
- North Central Regional Center for Rural Development 9
- Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development 10
- Southern Rural Development Center 11
- Western Rural Development Center 11

Completed Projects Highlights 12

Goal 3: To Create Capacity Through Leadership Introduction 13
Current Projects Highlights
- Collobarative projects of the Regional Rural Development Centers 14
- North Central Regional Center for Rural Development 14
- Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development 14
- Southern Rural Development Center 15

Completed Projects Highlights 16

Goal 4: To Assist in Family and Community Adjustments to Stress and Change Introduction 17
Current Projects Highlights
- Collobarative projects of the Regional Rural Development Centers 18
- North Central Regional Center for Rural Development 18
- Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development 19
- Southern Rural Development Center 20
- Western Rural Development Center 21

Completed Projects Highlights 21

Goal 5: To Promote Constructive Use of the Environment Introduction 24
Current Projects Highlights
- North Central Regional Center for Rural Development 25
- Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development 25
- Southern Rural Development Center 26
- Western Rural Development Center 26

Completed Projects Highlights 27

List of Collaborating Agencies 28

Introduction

Establishment of Regional Rural Development Centers

In the early 1970s, the Regional Rural Development Centers were established in response to a research initiative by the Cooperative State Research Service-USDA. With the Rural Development Act of 1972, extension activities were added to the Centers' function.

The Centers address issues facing rural communities that are often multi-state in scope and require faculties from several disciplines to resolve. States cannot individually justify the research and extension faculty necessary to address the many rural development issues. Often the four Centers work together on rural issues that are interregional or national in scope.

Organization and Funding

Each Center is administered by a joint agreement between USDA and the host institution operating for the Extension Service and the Experiment Station in the region. A board of directors composed of administrators and faculty from land-grant institutions, representatives of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service —USDA, and representatives from public and private agencies and organizations establishes policies and programming emphases.

Major core funding comes from the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service—USDA and the regions' land-grant universities. Increasingly, other federal and state agencies, private foundations, and public interests contribute funding in support of special programs as they envision mutually derived benefits from the combining of resources for achieving compatible visions and missions. The Economic Research Service—USDA, W. K. Kellogg Foundation, Farm Foundation, and Federal Office of Rural Health Policy have provided major funding for special projects of the Centers (please see page 28 for an additional list of collaborators.) Plans of work, progress reports, and annual reports approved by the various funders provide accountability for receipts and expenditures of public and private monies.

Regional Rural Development Centers Vision

The four Regional Rural Development Centers believe that small towns and rural places are the basic building blocks of rural society, and, in the context of a global society, they are becoming increasingly complex and multi-dimensional, resulting in an ever increasing number of public issues needing resolution. The Centers recognize that individuals, the foundation of these rural communities, are capable of growth, development, and change, and that rural society can be enhanced by increasing the individual, organizational, and problem-solving knowledge and skills of its residents. Finally, we believe that creating a shared vision for the future of sustainable communities requires democratic participation.

Regional Rural Development Centers Mission

Small towns and rural places face numerous barriers that inhibit the development of their fullest potential; in response to this, the four Regional Rural Development Centers serve as unique regional and national networks to catalyze, initiate, facilitate, and evaluate research and educational programs that have the potential to improve the social and economic well-being of individuals in small towns and rural places.

Key Issues for the 1990s

The Centers' research and educational programs focus on developing the skills and problem solving processes of individuals in small towns and rural places. Helping individuals create and enhance community-wide debates and resolve public issues is one of our major goals. Supporting extensive ongoing environmental scans of rural communities has resulted in us targeting our resources on five key issues for the 1990s:

- To Improve Economic Competitiveness and Diversification
- To Support Management and Strategic Planning for Economic Investment
- To Create Capacity through Leadership
- To Assist in Family and Community Adjustments to Stress and Change
- To Promote Constructive Use of the Environment

Goal 1: To Improve Economic Competitiveness and Diversification

Major socio-economic shifts such as globalization are affecting the ability of small rural places to maintain productive and sustainable economies. Rural economies are particularly taxed in adapting to these changes because of their small size, geographic isolation, low population density, lack of employment diversification, and traditional dependence on natural-resource based industries and routine manufacturing. Applied research and extension can help public and private decision makers adjust to a) structural realignments affecting the economic bases of rural economies, b) cyclical trends in the national and global economies, and c) more effective transportation and information linkages which increase rural-urban economic integration. The Centers focus on ameliorating problems and facilitating potential opportunities.

Goal 1: To Improve Economic Competitiveness and Diversification
Collaborative Projects of the Regional Rural Development Centers

Communities in Economic Transition: A Multiregional Conference on Rural Economic Development. Extension Service-USDA created the Communities in Economic Transition National Initiative to focus on the changing economic structure of many rural communities. In response to this initiative, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development organized a conference held in Columbus, Ohio, on November 7-9, 1994. The Farm Foundation, the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, and Extension Service-USDA were co-sponsors of the conference. Persons representing a broad spectrum of rural economic development interests were invited to the conference to allow a larger networking forum beyond the usual extension personnel. The conference provided training in community strategic and action planning, enterprise development and tourism development. *(NCRCRD, NERCRD)*

Heartland Community Development Conference. The 1994 Heartland Economic Development Conference was held in Branson, Missouri, on November 2-3. The theme, "4-State Regional Partnerships" was unique in that it highlighted the commonalties of the four states of Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Kansas nestled in the heartland of the United States. The conference featured presentations and panels concerning environmental issues, tourism, retirement and economic development opportunities. The North Central Center and the Southern Center were co-sponsors of the conference. *(NCRCRD, SRDC)*

Home-based Business: The Next Economic Generation. An invisible revolution is gaining momentum in communities around the world. People from all walks of life are taking advantage of changing work environments and improved technology to operate home-based businesses and micro-enterprises. This new home industry, however, is experiencing growing pains and struggling for recognition and assistance. Because of the need to create an awareness of the importance and economic impact of Home-based Business, the first national conference, held in Tulsa, Oklahoma, on May 1-4, 1994, brought together experts, authors, and service and product providers to gain and share information on a variety of topics. *(NCRCRD, NERCRD, SRDC)*

Wyo-Mon-Dak Community Development Conference. "Helping Rural America Thrive" was the theme of the second annual Wyo-Mon-Dak Community Development Conference that was held March 18-19, 1994, in Sundance, Wyoming. This theme was befitting for a conference that attracted more than 100 participants from a four-state area to share experiences and learn new ideas for community improvement and revitalization. Underlining the significance of this conference was the attendance of several undergraduate and graduate students from Black Hills State University, Spearfish, South Dakota, to obtain firsthand knowledge of tourism strategies. The concurrent sessions focused on tourism, small businesses, business development, community infrastructure, regional development coalitions, and unconventional livestock enterprises. The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development and the Western Rural Development Center were co-sponsors of the conference. *(NCRCRD, WRDC)*

Goal 1: To Improve Economic Competitiveness and Diversification
North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

Assisting Small Apparel Manufacturers and Retailers: Forming a Three-State Consortium for Improved Resource Development and Service to Apparel Manufacturers and Retailers. Representatives from the University of Missouri, Iowa State University, and Oklahoma State University have formed an interest network to examine the potential for developing a delivery system to provide marketing and management expertise to small, independent, locally-owned apparel manufacturers and retailers in rural areas of Missouri, Iowa and Oklahoma. The interest network, called the Textile and Apparel Alliance of Mid-America, is planning to pilot educational seminars in 1995 in each of the three states on topics that have been identified as problem areas by apparel manufacturers. *(NCRCRD)*

GIS Technology: A New Approach to Modeling Rural Retail Trade Area Capture. This research proposes that Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology affords the opportunity to associate and analyze rural blocks of population with the most likely rural retail trade center. Through data overlays of social, economic and demographic data, inferences will be made about the character of these rural populations and their retail configurations. Results from this type of research could aid retailers in rural trade centers to better target and understand their markets. *(NCRCRD)*

National Tourism Satellite Conference Question and Answer Publication. Forty-five of the most commonly asked questions about rural tourism development were answered in a publication that serves as a follow-up to the national rural tourism satellite conference held in November 1991. Frequently mentioned and widely applicable questions were forwarded to appropriate experts for a response, including teleconference panelists, faculty from the Tourism Center or project national planning committee.

government officials and policy makers, trade association representatives, State Offices of Tourism, and community leaders. The publication is available from the University of Minnesota Tourism Center. Funding agencies include the North Central Center, EDA and the Tourism Center. *(NCRCRD)*

North Central Region Business Retention and Expansion Programs by Community and Business Type. The intent of this research project is to improve our understanding of Business Retention and Expansion program methods. Special attention is being given to variables that extension and community leaders can use to facilitate progress toward locally-recognized economic development goals. Specific objectives include differentiation of economic and social characteristics of participating communities and targeted businesses, development of recommendations, appraisal of results by participating community and business leaders, and description of collaboration with allied agencies and organizations. *(NCRCRD)*

Recycling Waste Paper, Wood Residues and Coal Fines as Fuel Pellets for Home Heating: An Opportunity for Rural Entrepreneurs. A significant proportion of counties in the North Central region have been identified as "severely distressed" as defined by Appalachian Regional Commission economic criteria. Development and application of natural resource-based solutions are needed for these rural areas. This study will look at the economic feasibility of creating small business opportunities within rural communities to produce fuel pellets from multigrade wastepaper, wood residues and high sulfur coal fines, and to market the pellets as a home heating fuel for pellet stoves. Community conditions under which such enterprises would be feasible will also be explored. *(NCRCRD)*

Tri-State Community Development Conference. The theme of the fifth annual Tri-State Community Development Conference was "Rural Community Innovations," with concurrent sessions focusing on the reuse of community resources, economic development and technology, and community action for health care. The conference, held in Cresco, Iowa, on May 19, 1994, was designed to (1) provide a networking opportunity for community leaders from Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa, (2) share experiences and gain new ideas about practical solutions to community problems, (3) discover innovative solutions to rural community issues, and (4) be inspired about being a leader in a rural community. The conference was jointly sponsored by the Dairyland System of Electric Cooperatives; Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin Extension; and the North Central Center. *(NCRCRD)*

Work and Family Policies in the Midwest: People, Business and Economic Development. Companies often compare themselves to other businesses in terms of products, earnings, productivity and innovation. A new area of business concern—family friendliness or work and personal life—has begun to receive similar interest. In response to employer interest, this study measured the extent to which companies have implemented policies and programs designed to assist employees in managing work and family responsibilities more effectively. In January 1994, 403 randomly selected companies in four states participated in a telephone survey. Results showed that, in general, companies are least likely to offer flexible work arrangements, leave or any kind of support for dependent care. Only 15 percent offer resource and referral services, and less than 10 percent of the firms had conducted any kind of formal assessment about work/family needs and issues. *(NCRCRD)*

Goal 1: To Improve Economic Competitiveness and Diversification
Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

Coalitions for Agriculture and the Environment in Urbanizing Areas. Faculty from Rutgers —The State University of New Jersey and the University of Connecticut are working together to establish an information base and functional model that will facilitate the effective transition to a more holistic and synergistic natural resource management perspective by: (1) activating a project advisory committee and focus groups; (2) conducting a series of focus group meetings and a state conference; (3) analyzing findings and recommendations of focus groups and developing strategies for implementation of recommendations; (4) hosting a Northeast Regional Conference to present the survey results; and (5) disseminating the results. *(NERCRD)*

Northeast Farmer's Markets as Business Incubators: A Study of Rural Enterprise Development. This project documented and measured the extent to which farmer's markets contribute to the rural economic base through successful incubation (creation and sustenance) of rural enterprises, including food and fiber producers, processors, and cottage industries. Emphasis of research was on farmer's markets' contributions to income, entrepreneurship, and business skills development of their members. *(NERCRD)*

"Through Leadership, we show how to be not just how to do it."

Goal 1: To Improve Economic Competitiveness and Diversification
Southern Rural Development Center

Economic Impact of Attracting Retirees on Ozark Mountain Communities. This is a study of the economic and socio-political impact of retirement in-migration on rural communities. The study evaluates the economic impact of retirees in communities of the Arkansas and Oklahoma Ozark Mountain region and clarifies and specifies the kinds of economic impacts on communities that attract retirees. *(SRDC)*

A Heartland Economic Development Conference is held annually for community leaders, volunteers and professionals from Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma. Participants learn from one another about successful community-based development projects they might try in their own communities. *(SRDC)*

A Survey of Prevalent Production and Marketing Practices in Meat Goats of Southern Origin. The question of how much meat goat is worth was studied, as well as various channels for marketing meat goat. Statistical data on ethnic demography, goat production by state, and goat kill through USDA approved slaughter plants also were analyzed. *(SRDC)*

Goal 1: To Improve Economic Competitiveness and Diversification
Western Rural Development Center

Energy-Related Boom Communities After the Boom. Although a number of in-depth analyses of modern-day boom towns were conducted during the 1970s and 1980s, there have been virtually no systematic follow-ups to any of the earlier studies. As a result, we know very little about how these communities may have been impacted by post-boom periods of relative stability or even sharp decline. A multi-state team of social scientists plans to investigate patterns of long-term change and adaptation in a number of previously-studied boom towns. The Center supported a group get together to prepare proposals for this research which will bring increased understanding of rural community change. Proposals were submitted Summer 1994, and others will be submitted Fall 1995. *(WRDC)*

State Fiscal Crises and Rural Communities. A preliminary planning meeting of agricultural economists from four states was convened in April 1993 to identify common interests in local public finance across western states. A specialization of labor has developed in local public finance research and education in the West between agricultural economists and political scientists, yet common interests do exist. Both disciplines want to find out ways they can provide information and leadership in their state in response to public finance issues. In early 1994, six agricultural economists and six political scientists from California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Oregon gathered to share past experiences from various public finance programs, initiatives, and projects across the western states and to discuss the role(s) university personnel can or should play in state fiscal crises. Proceedings will be published, and a follow-up two-day, multi-state conference for academics, government officials, and active community leaders and volunteers is being planned. This project expands upon and utilizes the findings of a recent WRDC-supported project entitled "Effective Local Government Practices." *(WRDC)*

Western Rural Development Center Rural Tourism Projects:

Rural Tourism has been adopted by the USDA-Extension Service's national tourism initiative as the community assessment piece of the OuR-Town program. The program coordinator at the Western Rural Development Center participates on these two national design teams. To help meet the numerous requests from around the western region and nation, a self-help manual based upon the process was published in draft form for assistance to communities considering rural tourism, and a regional workshop was held in Salt Lake City, April 1994, to train Extension and non-Extension staff in the process. Based upon feedback from ongoing pilot sites, the manual will be revised and available early 1995. *(WRDC)*

Alaska. Four rural Alaskan communities have collaborated in a search for funds to bring the tourism assessment project to their areas. The Kane County Tourist Council in southern Nevada is also enthusiastic about implementing the program in the three small towns near Glen Canyon. *(WRDC)*

Montana. A pilot project in Choteau, Montana, tested a 14-step tourism assessment process. The process does not start with the assumption that tourism is a desirable strategy for every community. It stresses the need for, and guides a community through, a series of assessments—social, economic, environmental—to better understand the potential costs and benefits of tourism development; this knowledge will help a community make a more informed decision as to whether tourism is a strategy worth pursuing. The process and materials used with the pilot community were developed by a group of regional Extension faculty with input from the Montana Division of Tourism and USFS Forest Service R-1. The model is being further tested in three more rural Montana communities. *(WRDC)*

Nevada. A master plan to develop tourism in White Pine County, Nevada, would not have been possible without materials presented at the Western Center's workshop; until their program, "there simply weren't any strategies for analyzing the tourism potential of rural areas," according to Tom Harris, director of the Center for Economic Development at the University of Nevada, which worked on the project funded by a grant under the U.S. Forest Service Economic Recovery Program. *(WRDC)*

Western Rural Development Center Business Retention and Expansion Projects

4 Corners Collaboration/Business Retention & Expansion. The Western Center assists a multi-agency group on a collaborative project for the Four Corners Region of the states of Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona. This effort is an outgrowth of the Strengthening Partnerships for Active Rural Communities implemented last year to train USDA professionals to be more effective facilitators of the community development process. It examines the importance of collaboration in addressing national and global challenges facing rural leadership today. The USDA Extension Service, Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, and Rural Development Administration are working together in this 4 Corners project which also involves other higher education institutions, State Rural Development Councils, the Bureau of Land Management, local rural and economic development groups, community leaders, and elected and appointed government and agency personnel at all levels. The Western Center recently supported the group to meet to develop a proposal to seek grant monies to operate a regional Business Retention & Expansion program. *(WRDC)*

Alaska. The Western Center supported travel to assist Sitka, Alaska undertake a Business Retention and Expansion process, which the local extension agent followed through on. Western faculty continue to finetune this process and the materials to best fit our regional needs and uniqueness. Utah State University, with US West Foundation funding, produced a video, containing region-wide footage, to help train people for the key roles in the Business Retention & Expansion process. The Western Center has agreed to support New Mexico State University to produce another training video based on its manual. *(WRDC)*

New Mexico. Based at least in part on its sponsorship of a Business Retention and Expansion project in Portales, New Mexico, a group of public and private agencies calling themselves Rural Economic Assistance Link was awarded the American Economic Development Council's Arthur D. Little Award for the best overall economic development program in the U.S. A team from this group was trained in Business Retention & Expansion at the Western Center's workshop. *(WRDC)*

Goal 1: To Improve Economic Competitiveness and Diversification
Selected Completed Projects Highlights:

Southern Rural Development Center

Oklahoma. A new aviation business in Nowata County, Oklahoma (pop. 3,890) is an indirect result of training funded by the Southern Rural Development Center through the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service. The new business meant additional jobs as well as opportunities for students to receive training and exposure to aeronautics and engineering. A series of workshops were held using materials developed in the Center-sponsored project. Aimed at increasing economic activity, the workshops provided information on alternative ways of achieving economic development to local leaders with little or no training in economic development. *(SRDC)*

Western Rural Development Center

Business Retention and Expansion was adapted for western communities from a program originated in Ohio by Professor George Morse, then of Ohio State, currently at University of Minnesota. With support from the Western Center, a team of regional Extension faculty conducted a pilot program designed to make Business Retention & Expansion relevant to natural resource based communities in the West. A regional training workshop sponsored by the Western Center, March 3-5, 1992, in Tempe, Arizona, was attended by 39 people from 12 western states and two territories.

To implement the western Business Retention and Expansion program, community leaders visit local employers to find out what their businesses need and how community support and action can be adapted to facilitate retention or expansion of businesses. Given the dynamics of community interaction, it is not always possible to know precisely what business growth results directly from a retention and expansion effort. However, presented below are some estimates of two highly successful programs.

Montana was one of the pilot states, and the program there has been in operation for four years, funded almost exclusively through the Extension Service with primarily in-kind contributions from the eight participating communities. The success of these efforts, however, has attracted attention from state government. Montana's governor recently announced a state-wide Business Retention & Expansion effort that will use the model developed with the Western Center support. *(WRDC)*

New Mexico. The Business Retention & Expansion effort in rural New Mexico has been in full swing for only two years. Many public and private agencies in the state are cooperating to promote the program. Their initial invest-

ment includes educational materials tailored for specific conditions in the area. Five communities are already involved in the process. *(WRDC)*

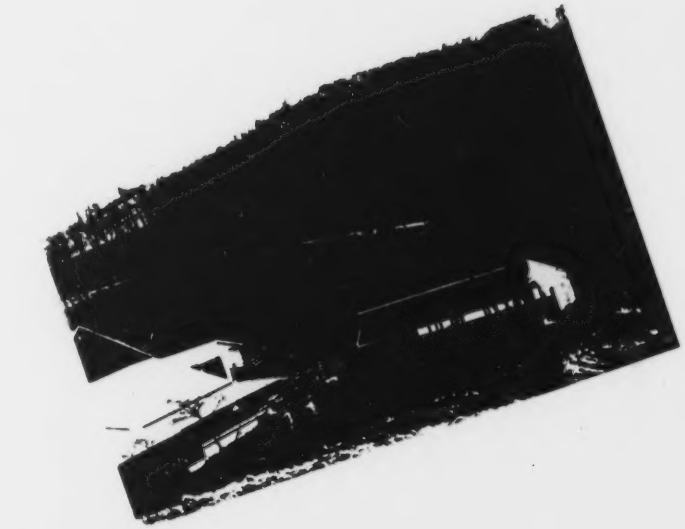
Business R&E in New Mexico. A group of eleven economic development partners from New Mexico constituted the largest team at the Western Rural Development Center training. These people represented some of the organizaitons that have formed the New Mexico Rural Economic Assistance Link, or REAL. In the months following the workshop, the team put together a successful Retention & Expansion program in Portales that helped double revenues and increase the employment base of a local peanut processor to the equivalent of approximately 50 full time employees.

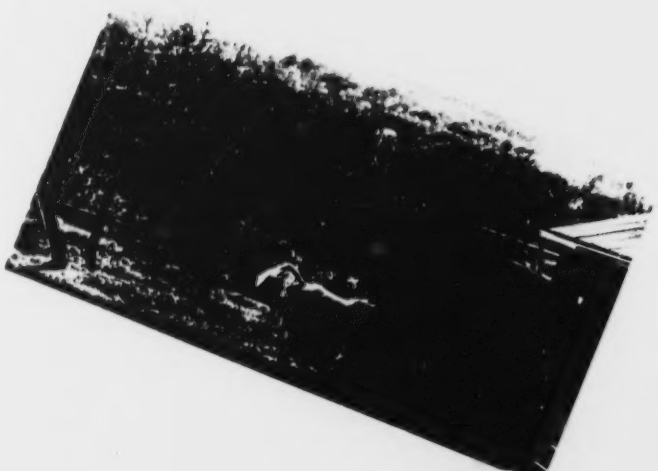
Many people who have worked with the Retention &Expansion program believe that the enhanced business climate it has generated is at least partly responsible for location of a milk processing plant in Portales. Mid-America Dairyman, Inc. employs 15 people; a new trucking firm that transports the milk employed 126 people as of November 1994; an additional 300 on-farm jobs have been created in eastern New Mexico on dairies producing milk to supply the new plant. One-hundred-and-thirty-four dollars per job is the estimated cost of retention of jobs.

Working from the Western Center's documents, New Mexico produced a customized set of training materials specifically adapted for conditions in the state. Two videotapes have been produced that document the Portales Retention &Expansion program for communities interested in the program. Five New Mexico communities have received assistance from REAL during the past two years to conduct business retention and expansion programs. The American Economic Development Council recently conferred on the New Mexico REAL program the Arthur D. Little Award for the best overall economic development program in the U.S. *(WRDC)*

Business R&E in Montana. During the past five years the Montana Extension Service has helped eight communities hold onto more than 1200 jobs through application of the western business retention and expansion program. Business licenses in Deer Lodge County alone have increased from 375 in 1989, when the R&E program began, to 518 as of December 31, 1994. Two more small Montana towns are in the early stages of implementation. To date, the estimated cost of retention per job is $185.00.

Based on the success of its work in business retention and expansion, Governor Racicot has asked the Montana Extension Service to help extend the program in a statewide assessment of the potential for business retention and expansion. The Governor's plan is to visit 100 Montana businesses during the coming year. *(WRDC)*





STRATEGIC PLANNING

Goal 2: To Support Management and Strategic Planning for Economic Investment

The ability of local officials to provide public policy direction in response to demands imposed by federal and state mandates, and to provide adequate public services depends on the capacity of local resources. Unlike urban society with its vast human resource base of full-time politicians, effective leaders, technical experts, and administrators, the human resource base of rural localities is significantly reduced. Local officials often work full-time jobs in addition to serving as leaders in their communities. If rural localities are to sustain themselves and deal with the issues they face, their leaders must have the support and acquire the technical knowledge of how to develop strategic plans, generate policies, and effectively manage and administer their local resources and capitalize on future opportunities to effectively meet the increased and mandated demands of rural society. Applied research and extension efforts will be linked to support and enhance rural community governance through continuous dialogue in order to be most useful, workable, approachable, and timely.

Goal 2: To Support Management and Strategic Planning for Economic Investment
Collaborative Project of the Regional Rural Development Centers

Linking Higher Education to State Rural Development Councils. The four Regional Rural Development Centers are using their regional networks to identify at least one rural researcher per state that will help the State Rural Development Councils access higher education resources relevant to their priority issues. This will bring higher education into the National Initiative on Rural America as a partner and resource to assist the State Rural Development Councils. A forum will be created in each region to identify innovative research-based activities that would aid the Councils in their design and pursuit of rural development strategies. A bonus of this process will be an intelligence feedback system informing academic institutions about current rural information and knowledge needs, thus impacting research and scholarship of both applied and classroom work. *(NCRCRD, NERCRD, SRDC, WRDC)*

Goal 2: To Support Management and Strategic Planning for Economic Investment
North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

Cooperation or Coercion? Effect of Mandates and Regulations on Small Government Units. Over the last 10 years, state and federal governments have imposed various rules, regulations and mandates on small governmental entities, often without the funding attached, without program flexibility, and without technical assistance. The perceived volume of mandates with no accompanying funds, and the lack of options to pay for the mandates compared to urban areas, have caused many small communities to shift their resources, delay action, or simply not meet the regulations. This research project will address these issues by: determining which types of mandates communities have found to be particularly difficult to comply with and establishing how many communities have actually been cited for failure to comply, determining how mayors view particular types of mandates in terms of their perceived benefits to community residents, cost to local government, and trade-offs involved in their implementation, providing some tentative explanations for why communities vary in their responses to various mandates, and developing ideas for educational program activities that will assist public officials in dealing with mandates. *(NCRCRD)*

Evaluating Strategic Planning and Visioning Practices in Rural Communities. Many states, particularly in the Midwest, have programs to assist community residents in setting and implementing an action agenda for community development. The focus of this project has been to present an overview of these program formats, identify ways in which the program leaders identify successes in their programs, isolate factors which they consider essential to achieving those successes, and present directions which these programs are taking to incorporate improvements. Plans are underway to generate a document that will guide agencies that are initiating community visioning projects so they can avoid mistakes and can incorporate the best thinking available on this topic. *(NCRCRD)*

Financial Management in Rural Counties: An Examination of Current Practice and the Role of Education in Improving Methods Used. In the process of gathering information on financial management practices of elected and appointed government officials in rural counties of Illinois, Iowa, Indiana and Michigan, several questions were raised: what do government officials "need to know" about financial management? what methods have been used to present this material in the past and with what success? what problems have been encountered and how can these be addressed? and what steps could be taken to improve the quality of instruction? Based on the concepts that emerged from this discussion, the project team will be developing financial management training materials for local government officials. *(NCRCRD)*

Information Liaison Opportunity: Nebraska Rural Development Commission. In response to the "Information Liaison Opportunity" available through the Economic Research Service and the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, the Nebraska Rural Development Commission has received funds to support their emerging drinking water and waste water infrastructure initiative. The Commission will be working with the Center for Rural Revitalization (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) and the Infrastructure Center (University of Nebraska-Omaha). Faculty and staff with expertise in drinking water and waste water infrastructure technology and issues will be assigned to work with the Commission through a public service or extension-type commitment, and one or more university graduate students will be retained during the coming year to work directly with the Commission on this initiative. *(NCRCRD)*

Location Incentives in the North Central Region. Rural development policy has shifted from federal farm income stabilization programs to the encouragement of economic diversification through manufacturing growth. In their efforts to achieve this, communities offer both financial and nonfinancial incentives to businesses. While the use of these incentives is widespread, they are poorly understood. State and local decision makers need more information about what types of incentives exist and their costs and benefits. This project will document the types and levels of incentives offered or allowed by states in the North Central Region. *(NCRCRD)*

The Mosaic of the Rural Midwest: Formulating and Using a Geodemographic Cluster System of Census Block Groups for the Rural Midwest. Since the early 1970s, Geodemographic clustering has successfully been applied in targeted marketing applications. With these systems, direct-mail merchandisers and retail marketers are able, with surprising precision, to identify and reach "their" customers. Rather than creating another marketing and commercial segmentation system, however, this research will create a set of social and economic clusters that convincingly demonstrate the potential of such systems for research and analytic applications in community and economic development. The results will offer an option for small-area geographic tagging that creates a useful set of realistic standards for comparing and contrasting small areas across the broad and heterogeneous Midwestern region. *(NCRCRD)*

Multistate Coalition for Rural Development Through Citizen Understanding and Participation on Public Issues. A multistate panel of researchers and Congressional staff were organized to provide input into the design of a national survey instrument. The Rural Policy Research Institute commissioned the Gallup Organization to conduct 500 interviews with randomly selected households from metro counties and 500 interviews with nonmetro adults on national health care reform issues. Specifically, RUPRI was interested in the differential attitudes of rural and urban responses. Support for this project was provided by the North Central Center and the Farm Foundation. *(NCRCRD)*

Population Growth Management Policy. The intent of this research is to better understand the forces that impact population change, employment and wage levels in rural areas. Not all of these forces occur in the rural areas themselves, nor are they all subject to rural control. An irrational urban growth pattern that ignores congestion cost will serve neither urban nor rural people. These research results could shed light on the controversial issue of how and where to direct growth for a better quality of life for more people. A report will be published by the North Central Center. *(NCRCRD)*

Recreational Housing in the Upper Great Lake States. Recreational housing is a substantial component of the housing stock of many Upper Great Lakes counties, and contributes additional jobs and income to host communities. However, recent efforts to evaluate economic development strategies for rural communities have ignored the role of recreational homes. The research on tourism also pays little attention to the contributions of recreational housing in local and regional economies. It is therefore the primary purpose of this project to identify the social and economic contributions of and conflicts that arise with recreational housing in rural communities. The research plan involves an analysis of secondary data, the collection of survey data in three communities, and in-depth case studies of the social, political and economic dimensions of recreational home ownership in rural communities. *(NCRCRD)*

A Research Agenda for Studying Rural Public Service Delivery Alternatives in the North Central Region. The purpose of this monograph, written by rural social scientists in the North Central Region, is to develop a research agenda to study ways to improve the availability and access to public services for individuals living in rural areas. The discussion focuses on general conceptual and methodological issues pertaining to research on services. Nonetheless, it should be applicable to a wide range of specific service areas such as health, education and income maintenance, as well as consumer groceries and dry goods. This report is available from the North Central Center. *(NCRCRD)*

Rural Retailing: Access to Goods and Related Services A Multidisciplinary Symposium. The purpose of this national symposium, scheduled for June 1-3, 1995, is to provide an opportunity for dialogue on the knowledge base in the various fields related to retailing and rural development. The objectives are to facilitate a multidisciplinary approach to problem solving and to improve the business environment and consumer choices in rural communities. The symposium is being sponsored by the North Central Region Experiment Stations, CSRS-USDA, and the North Central Regional Coordinating Committee (NCR)-65: Clothing Production, Distribution and Consumption. The North Central Center provided funds for planning committee expenses and the printing and mailing of symposium brochures. *(NCRCRD)*

Goal 2: To Support Management and Strategic Planning for Economic Investment
Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

Adult Foster Care: An Economic and Social Alternative to Institutionalization in Rural Communities. Building on the work from the White House Northeast Adult Foster Care Conference that was held, October 20-21, 1994, the principal investigators of this project will provide educational training packages to extension professionals to enable them to facilitate/coordinate collaborative efforts on both the state-and agency-level for adult foster care programs. The methodology and effectiveness of the educational training packages for cooperative extension professionals, adult foster care administrators and personnel in the Northeast, other adult foster care host families, and caregivers will be evaluated. *(NERCRD)*

Application of Economic Development Concepts in Small Communities: A Research Project to Facilitate the Increased Effectiveness of Public Policy Choices. Project principal investigators will study the application of

- expertise and information for economic development policy making by officials in nine small communities in Delaware, Maryland, and Rhode Island in order to gain a better understanding of the technology transfer process. Focus will be on attaining a better understanding of small community economic development practices. Literature in this area will be enriched with specific case studies and analysis on small coastal communities adjacent to metropolitan areas in three states in the Northeast. *(NERCRD)*

A Community Perspective on Senior Living Facilities. This project will examine the retiree attraction from the perspective of the community. It will determine the potential demand for senior housing facilities in West Virginia; inventory and categorize housing facilities used nationally to attract seniors; determine costs and services of various arrangements; investigate costs and benefits to the community of a subset of these facility types; and develop recommendations for senior housing in West Virginia. *(NERCRD)*

Community Supported Agriculture : Economic Alternative for Strengthening Farms and Rural Communities. Faculty from the University of Massachusetts are studying the economic benefits of Community Supported Agriculture. Community Supported Agriculture is a method of structuring farm operations for the benefit of farmers, consumers, and communities. The purpose of this research is to contribute to the strength, independence, and viability of Northeast rural communities and agriculture by: 1) examining and documenting the economic viability of Community Supported Agriculture in the Northeast and, 2) establishing a baseline for a long-range study of Community Supported Agriculture in the Northeast. *(NERCRD)*

Consumer Education Network Systems (CENTS). While providing a broad range of research-based resources to consumers in their own communities, this project reveals which resources are most useful for rural communities. Trained adults and youth volunteers from the communities are reaching isolated rural consumers of all ages, using local or portable computer hardware and text-based computer reference files. *(NERCRD)*

The Impact of Service Employment on Non-Metropolitan Households. Faculty from Penn State and the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont are teaming up to examine the implications of employment in various service industries for maintaining the level of income of different types of nonmetropolitan households, as well as providing benefits such as health care insurance to family members. Also, this project will assess whether the economic status of households in nonmetropolitan areas has declined, remained stable or increased over time. *(NERCRD)*

Student Attitudes Towards Economic Development and Outmigration. This project will include a survey of high school seniors in three West Virginia and five Maine high schools about their expectations on remaining in their home counties after graduation. The project also will ask seniors what effect various types of economic development events such as new local job opportunities might have on their decision to remain in or leave the county. *(NERCRD)*

Goal 2: To Support Manaqment and Strategic Planning for Economic Investment
Southern Rural Development Center

Developing Partnerships for Rural Health was a conference addressing rural health issues in the region. It was designed to facilitate interaction between state rural health agencies, to share experiences and approaches of strategic decisions for health programming, to develop partnerships and strategies to facilitate decisions for health and to facilitate the design of implementation plans for state teams. *(SRDC)*

Improve Labor Productivity by Creating Better Jobs is a publication showing that creating more jobs for people with education beyond high school may be a key factor in creating more public support for better schools. *(SRDC)*

Southern Rural Economic Development and Branch Plant/Local Firm Development Options is documenting the earning differences between jobs created by locally-owned and outside firms in North Carolina. The study is investigating the relative access of native North Carolinians and migrants from other states to higher-earning jobs in locally- and outside-owned firms. *(SRDC)*

Goal 2: To Support Management and Strategic Planning for Economic Investment
Western Rural Development Center

Contribution of Investment & Transfer Incomes to the Growth and Stability of Counties in the West. "Sources of Growth and Cyclical Stability for Nevada Counties: Transfer Payments and Property Income" by Gary W. Smith and Thomas R. Harris in *The Social Science Journal*, Volume 30, Number 4, 1993. This article concludes that in regional economic analysis and community economic development planning, recognition should be given to the increasing importance of retirement-related transfer payments and property income. Both are leading components of total personal income growth and sources of cyclical stability. Creating jobs helps to retain and attract people, but retaining and attracting *people*, especially retirees, also helps to create employment. When exploring

opportunities for developing, diversifying, and stabilizing their local economy, planners and decision makers should evaluate the potential net benefit of retaining, attracting, and accommodating the retiree population. *(WRDC)*

IMPLAN (Multi-regional rural/urban input-output models in the western U.S.) This past year, the IMPLAN project used the multi-regional input-output model of the Portland, Oregon trade area to analyze the economic impact of timber harvest reductions due to protection of the spotted owl. Economic impacts were estimated for both the directly impacted rural region as well as the indirectly impacted Portland metropolitan area. The results are published in the paper entitled, *Interregional Effects of Reduced Timber Harvests: The Impact of the Northern Spotted Owl Listing in Rural and Urban Oregon*, which has already been distributed to the government agencies involved in the timber harvesting issue. Other publications are in process. *(WRDC)*

Goal 2: To Support Management and Strategic Planning for Economic Investment
Completed Project Highlight:

Southern Rural Development Center

Estimates are the Georgia Appraisal Program has saved the state's taxpayers 2 to 4 million dollars in the years since it was installed. This program was funded by a grant from the Southern Rural Development Center and with support from other organizations. The cooperative work resulted in an affordable appraisal program that helps counties maintain up-to-date, reliable data in the tax assessors' offices. *(SRDC)*

"To effect the quality of life; that is the highest form of art."

—Henry David Thoreau, Walden

Goal 3: To Create Capacity Through Leadership

Agendas of local citizens and decision-makers in small and rural localities are becoming more controversial, complex, and technical. Increasing societal awareness of various issues such as concerns about the environment and natural resources; roads, highways, and infrastructure; environmental impacts; waste management and water quality; fire protection; and law enforcement; health care and recreation; education and social service; liability insurance and risk management; and changing local economies and changing local economic export and tax bases places new burdens on rural leaders and administrators and requires a breadth of decision making on a scale not previously faced in rural localities. Educational programs based upon research, experience, and demonstrated utility for local users will be continually upgraded and adapted as appropriate for the clientele.

LEADERSHIP

Goal 3: To Create Capacity Through Leadership
Collaborative Projects of the Regional Rural Development Centers

The Power of Collaborating: Leadership, Vision, Commitment, Action. The USDA Forest Service has taken on increased responsibility in the area of rural community assistance. Field staff need stronger leadership skills to be most effective in working with communities as they strive to improve living conditions, provide employment opportunities, enrich the cultural life, and enhance the environment. Staff from all four Regional Rural Development Centers have worked with extension specialists from around the country and developed a leadership program titled "Power of Shared Vision." Materials and exercises promote an action attitude towards rural development issues and opportunities; create an increased working knowledge of the nature of leadership and its value to rural development; develop key leadership skills for working with communities; and strengthen linkages among rural development service agencies and their professional staff. Participants in the Winter/Spring 1994 sessions were from the Southern region's Forest Service, Extension Service, and RC&Ds. The curriculum development process is an example of the National Design Team concept of the Communities in Economic Transition Initiative. The training program is expected to be utilized nation-wide. *(NERCRD, NCRCRD, SRDC, WRDC)*

WYO-MON-DAK Conference. The Western Center and the North Central Center helped fund the second annual WYO-MON-DAK conference. Over 100 community leaders, volunteers, and professionals from Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota met in Sundance, WY, to learn from one another about successful community-based development projects that they might try in their own community. *(WRDC, NCRCRD)*

Goal 3: To Create Capacity Through Leadership
North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

Enhancing Ethical Leadership. Enhancing Ethical Leadership is a curriculum developed by the Minnesota Extension Service for the Family Community Leadership Program. A curriculum development grant was provided by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. The North Central Center provided funds for a dissemination workshop in the North Central Region. Participants learned decision making models for ethical dilemmas; discussed adult ethical development and the role of education; and examined current events and helpful strategies looking at ethics of school-age youth, families and volunteers. *(NCRCRD)*

Leadership: Sustaining Action on Community and Organizational Issues is a tool developed for use by extension educators to help determine why communities and organizations go adrift in their efforts to move ahead. A conference was held in November 1994 to reflect on use of the model in the North Central Region in the past year since it was introduced. The North Central Center is now considering an evaluation of the material to answer the following questions: (1) To what degree do the materials reflect cutting-edge work in community development theory and practice? (2) What have been the facilitators and barriers to the use of the materials to date? (3) What have been the impacts on organizations and communities of the use of the materials? *(NCRCRD)*

Partners in Community Leadership: Youth and Adults Working Together for Better Communities. Partners in Community Leadership is an educational program for rural communities that provides opportunities for youth (ages 15-18) and adults to work as partners in the process of community decision-making for rural revitalization. Partners was produced in notebook form in 1993, and the project design team is now planning a follow-up survey to see to what extent the program has been implemented and what the impact has been. The information will be used to improve the materials and better target their dissemination. *(NCRCRD)*

Rural Community Transportation Leadership: A Community Approach to Transportation. As a follow-up on the national conference on Rural Intercity Passenger Transportation, the North Central Center is working with USDA's Office of Transportation on a rural transportation leadership initiative. The program will provide local leaders with tools to make cost-effective, strategic transportation decisions to meet long-range, community-defined needs. In light of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act and its planning requirements, this project has become even more relevant to rural transportation needs as states assume responsibility for implementing the national transportation program. *(NCRCRD)*

Goal 3: To Create Capacity Through Leadership
Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

Community Development Mentorships. The Vermont Council on Rural Development is undertaking an effort to develop six community-based "special assistantships" in cooperation with Vermont colleges and universities. This is a special project funded by the Economic Research Service—USDA. *(NERCRD)*

A Foundation for Policy Development Research in Rural Development. Faculty from Penn State have developed a

project with the following objectives: (1) to identify the major socioeconomic rural development issues and problems that concern private citizens and policy makers at the local, state, and national level; (2) to review research from a variety of disciplines that addresses these topics, with a specific focus on research results that identify actual or potential policy actions; (3) from this research, determine the direction of change resulting from the hypothesized or actual policy action, and the rates of change. That is, the attempt will be to identify the first and second derivatives associated with any given rural development issue and the policy action applied to address that issue. A matrix will be constructed with cells that show these relationships; (4) determine the potential for developing a unifying theoretical framework from which key policy parameters can be identified and estimated. The results will provide a synthesis of likely effects of policy actions on particular rural development issues, and the extent of agreement and disagreement in the literature. This is a special project funded by the Cooperative State Research Service. *(NERCRD)*

Information to Develop Extension Programs for Community Youth Leadership. By obtaining information about exemplary programs and processes, case studies of youth-in-community experiences, and a guide to potential funding sources, this project will assist Extension educators as they help adolescents obtain community citizenship and leadership learning experiences. This project is designed to provide this information for the development of a publication by the Northeast Center. *(NERCRD)*

Issues on Unwed Mothers in the Northeast Region: Characteristics of Successful Preventive Social Programs. Faculty and staff of the Community and Rural Development Institute at Cornell University are organizing a series of three multi-state conferences (New York, Vermont, Massachusetts, Delaware, and Pennsylvania) that will focus on the characteristics of successful social programs related to the issue of births to unwed mothers, particularly births to new mothers. The conferences are planned to be held in the Spring of 1995, Fall of 1995, and Winter of 1996, and will focus on the assessment of social programs that successfully reduce the rapidly growing rate of such births in the Northeast Region of the US in the nineties. The main audience of these conferences will constitute researchers, policy makers, members of local and state governments, extension officers, and social welfare officers. *(NERCRD)*

Life Skill Enrichment for Rural Youth: Development of a Prototype. Faculty from Penn State and the Indiana University of Pennsylvania are designing a project which provides for the development of a life skills training program prototype that consists of a cognitive-behavioral approach to develop the personal and social competence skills necessary for youth to deal with current problems, be better prepared to deal with future crises, and advance their mental health, social functioning, economic welfare, and physical well-being. *(NERCRD)*

Goal 3: To Create Capacity Through Leadership
Southern Rural Development Center

Building a Foundation for Community Leadership is an extension project to involve high school students in assessing community needs. The project will help students increase their understanding of and commitment to their communities and to become empowered to work toward solving local problems. It will also show communities the value of contributions their youth can make in identifying and meeting local needs, thereby expanding opportunities for students to participate in community affairs. *(SRDC)*

Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC) meetings were held across the country in the spring to introduce the EZ/EC program, which develops community leaders and helps them solve important community problems. The State Rural Development Councils coordinated the meetings at the request of the National Partnership Office. The Southern Rural Development Center selected and sponsored a researcher to observe how effective the State Rural Development Council system is in responding to that type of request. An evaluation report was published, indicating the Councils responded positively and contributed to the success of the meetings. *(SRDC)*

The Joint Southern Region Program Committee Meeting was designed to increase communication and planning among extension program leaders in the region. Other goals of the annual meeting were to develop a common understanding among program leaders of the program planning environment in the South, to improve extension programs through sharing ideas and resources and planning regional actions and to identify new issues of importance to the South and implications for current and future programs. *(SRDC)*

Relationship Between Rural Education and Economic Development records the economic role of education in rural areas and the policy conclusions researchers and policy makers have reached. It models different ways public and private roles in public education have been conceived and specifies policy implications. *(SRDC)*

Tech-Prep Syllabus for Rural Development in Poor Rural Communities is conducting a Geographic Information System and rural development curriculum workshop for tech-prep teachers in rural schools. The project includes on-site research and development of a community based tech-prep syllabus to teach rural development application of Geographic Information Systems. *(SRDC)*

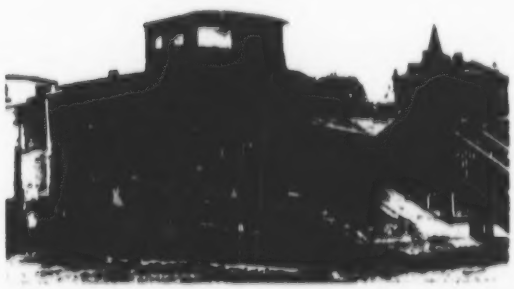
Goal 3: To Create Capacity Through Leadership
Completed Project Highlights:

Southern Rural Development Center

A small planning grant from the Southern Rural Development Center ultimately led to a proposal funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation for a leadership development program titled *Community Voices*. This program empowers people with the knowledge and skills they need to become a part of community affairs. There are numerous positive examples of individuals who never before participated in public affairs now leading successful community development projects. The program developed under direction of the Cooperative Extension Program at North Carolina A&T State University has proven itself effective especially in disadvantaged rural areas and is now expanding into urban and suburban settings and into other states. *(SRDC)*

"One hundred years from now, it won't matter what car I drove, what kind of house I lived in, how much I had in my back account, nor what my clothes looked like; but - the world may be a little better because I was important in the life of a child."

—Anonymous



Goal 4: To Assist in Family and Community Adjustments to Stress and Change

FAMILY & COMMUNITY

Consistent with the premise that all people regardless of age, race, ethnic origin, or location should have equal access to the services they need for social well-being, our research and education programs respond to the fact that existing services in rural areas are not meeting the special needs of diverse populations such as, youth and the elderly, poor and disadvantaged individuals and families, and culturally diverse audiences. Service areas that require special attention include housing, nutrition, health, education, transportation, and communications. To address these differences, our research and education programs focus on assessing the delivery of services to rural communities, families, and individuals; informing policy makers and others of their unique human service needs; and collaborating with other groups and organizations to search for ways to meet these needs. Our research and extension objective is to improve the understanding of issues, choices, and possible policy initiatives of rural service providers, consumers, policy makers, and their communities.

Goal 4: To Assist in Family and Community Adjustments to Stress and Change
Collaborative Projects of the Regional Rural Development Centers

Home-based Business: The Next Economic Generation was a conference addressing the growing trend to work at home. The conference was for individuals who support and serve home-based business owners or prospective owners. Topics included model programs for marketing, financial and management assistance, latest research findings, current issues and challenges, resource services and materials available, and organizing networks/associations for home-based business. *(NERCRD, SRDC)*

Pathways from Poverty Workshops. The Regional Rural Development Centers have received grants from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and the Farm Foundation to develop a program to examine pathways from poverty for rural areas in each respective region. This program, aimed at reducing poverty rather than alleviating hardship, will build upon efforts of the National Rural Studies Committee Task Force on Persistent Poverty. The Regional Rural Development Centers have been organizing and facilitating these workshops and will work with state teams to develop action plans appropriate to persons with low incomes in rural areas in each state. The objective is not welfare reform, but state and community strategies that move people from below to above the poverty level, particularly through increasing assets. Three pathways from poverty categories identified are: (1) Work and Income, (2) Family, Health, and Housing, (3) Education and Human Capital Investment. Workshops are designed to increase collaboration between state legislators, local government officials, business leaders, grassroots organizations and social scientists within states and across the region. *(NCRCRD, NERCRD, SRDC, WRDC)*

Task Force on Persistent Rural Poverty. March 1994, the National Rural Studies Task Force on Persistent Poverty sponsored a Congressional Colloquium on increasing the delivery of primary health care to low income rural residents. The Colloquium is supported by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and facilitates dialogue between members of Congress, legislative aides, and social scientists from the academic community on issues related to rural poverty and to potential pathways from poverty for rural people and places. Specific topics are selected by legislative aides, and the Task Force invites social scientists to attend a colloquium for an exchange of ideas. The goal of the Colloquium is to create a rural poverty policy education network that will allow members to establish contact with dozens of researchers and educators actively dealing with issues of rural poverty. The Colloquium represents a Phase II activity of the Task Force which focuses on policy education. The Task Force was conceived by Gene Summers as a direct result of his participation in the National Rural Studies Committee. The initial work of the Task Force was funded by grants from the Regional Rural Development Centers and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.
(NCRCRD, NERCRD, SRDC, WRDC)

Goal 4: To Assist in Family and Community Adjustments to Stress and Change
North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

Appalachian Youth in Foster Care: An Evaluation of a Rites of Passage Program. The migration of Appalachia and other ethnic/minority people from rural areas to urban areas, due to the decline of jobs in agriculture and industry within the region, has put these families and youth at potentially high-risk socially, psychologically and economically. Their cultures have been disrupted, and they now face the challenge of fitting into a community where they may be viewed negatively. The North Central Center has provided funds to create a work group focused on Appalachian and other ethnic/minority rural populations faced with economic problems. The work group will identify common interests and research questions and begin the process of outlining steps toward the writing of a larger grant proposal(s). The funding also will cover the initiation and completion of preliminary data collection to support the work group's funding proposal. *(NCRCRD)*

Economic Survival Kit for Unemployed and Underemployed Families. The Family Resource Management Portfolio was developed to provide county extension agents with current information dealing with the specific needs of the unemployed and underemployed, especially in rural areas. This information base provides easy access to publications while decreasing paperwork and storage space. It contains documents from a wide range of authors and discusses many topics, including stretching your dollars, working with creditors, finding a job, and creating your own employment. *(NCRCRD)*

Mid-America Senior Housing Conference. A senior housing task force was established in Page County, Iowa, to examine the status and potentials for alternative housing for the elderly in Page County, with implications for the four-state Mid-America region (comprised of 23 adjacent counties located in Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska). Working with the Page County Senior Housing Task Force was the Mid-America Senior Housing Coalition, comprised of representatives from the Mid-America region. A regional conference was held in September 1994 and addressed caregiver issues, residential modifications, and

non-traditional housing alternatives, in addition to a report on the Page County project. *(NCRCRD)*

North Central Regional Network for Prepared and Perishable Food Rescue Programs. This project lays the groundwork for helping rural communities address the problem of hunger in their areas using the concept of Prepared and Perishable Food Rescue Programs. Project representatives in Indiana, Iowa, and Wisconsin have compiled a list of not-for-profit groups that are collecting and distributing prepared and perishable foods in these three states. Directories are being printed, and postcards describing the directory will be mailed to food distribution organizations in the respective states. *(NCRCRD)*

Poverty Among Rural Children and Youth of the Midwest: A Three State, Collaborative Program of Research-Outreach Integration. The negative effects of child and growth poverty have been particularly pronounced in several Midwestern states due to the dramatic increase in child poverty rates over the last 10 years. In Michigan, the rate of increase in child poverty from 1979 to 1990 was 49 percent—the largest increase of any state in the nation. Colleagues from three land-grant universities in the North Central Region have joined forces to address this issue. They plan to design a synthetic program of research and outreach that will enhance understanding of, and service to, the rural youth of Iowa, Michigan, and Nebraska who are currently suffering, or are at-risk to suffer, the pernicious outcomes of persistent and pervasive poverty. It is their hope that this broad regional collaboration will have a presence and potential visibility sufficient to attract the attention of the public, of policy analysts, and of policy makers. *(NCRCRD)*

Rural Community Response to Plant Closings: A Socio-economic Analysis. A multidisciplinary, multistate research team of 12 rural analysts received a planning grant from the North Central Center to conduct exploratory research and develop further proposals on rural community response to plant closings. Goals of the research are: (1) to better understand the extent and consequences of rural plant closings; (2) to provide policy makers and non-urban leaders with suggestions on how to mitigate the economic and social impacts of shutdowns; and (3) to assemble information on proactive development strategies that would help rural communities sustain their economic base. *(NCRCRD)*

Goal 4: To Assist in Family and Community Adjustment to Stress and Change
Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

Building Rural Health Partnerships, a regional rural health care conference, was held in Burlington, Vermont, May 9-11, 1994. The conference brought together a wide range of health care and rural development partners from throughout the Northeast Region. The Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, Federal Office of Rural Health Policy, USDA—Extension Service, and Farm Foundation sponsored the conference. Conference topics included strategies for building rural health partnerships, strategies for decision making in health, various approaches and experiences at the local and state level, and community-based strategic health planning. These topics were presented by means of panel discussions and individual state breakouts.

The conference was attended by a diverse group of participants representing federal and state rural health offices, rural development specialists, extension personnel, and a host of individual state health organizations. Approximately eighty people from thirteen Northeast states attended. The combination of various groups and interests provided insight into rural health care activities that many participants were unaware of. Participant responses and evaluations revealed that the conference was extremely successful in building inter-agency cooperation and partnerships. It also increased participants' awareness of the availability of resources to improve and provide health care to rural residents.

As a follow-up activity, the Northeast Center will contact state offices of rural health, state rural development councils, and state cooperative extension specialists to keep track of partnership-building activities that have occurred as a result of the conference. *(NERCRD)*

Consumer Credit Management Practices of Northeastern Residents. Faculty from Penn State, the University of Maryland-Eastern Shore, and Delaware State University are working together to: 1) assess the level of knowledge that the rural poor, particularly African Americans, have about credit cards, 2) determine their usage of credit cards, and 3) provide an educational program that focuses on credit card and credit management. *(NERCRD)*

A Public Issues Education Workshop , sponsored by the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development and the Economic Research Service—USDA, was held in Albany, New York, November 14 -15, 1994. The workshop was proposed and developed by representatives of the Northeast Public Policy Education Committee to help state rural development council representatives better understand how to deal with controversial public issues in an educational context. The associate director of the Northeast Center served as the chair of the planning committee; other members included representatives from the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; the New York Office of Rural Affairs, and State Rural Development Council representatives.

The workshop included various sessions: *Public Issues Education , Framing Public Issues, Collaboration and Public Policy* , and*Why This Will Work*. The workshop also consisted of question and answer panel sessions, small group breakouts and reporting sessions, and networking breaks; Cooperative Extension Specialists facilitated these sessions. Additionally, a resource packet was provided to all participants.

There were 38 individuals who attended all or part of the workshop, including both the presenters and state rural development council representatives. The Northeast Center plans to follow-up this workshop by corresponding with participants to see how approaching controversial public policy issues from an educational perspective has helped them in their state rural development council work. *(NERCRD)*

A Regional Satellite Teleconference Designed to Explore the Expanding Role of Cooperative Approaches in Economic Development. Faculty from Cornell University will produce this teleconference entitled "Cooperation Works! Achieving Community Benefits Through Cooperatives, Networks and Alliances." Information will be disseminated on creative new cooperative businesses and networks which have recently formed in rural areas of the region. Specific rural economic issues also will be addressed, such as how to analyze appropriate cooperative business strategies. *(NERCRD)*

The Relationship of Nurse's Attitudes About the AIDS and their Experience to Jobstress to the Delivery of Nursing Care to People with AIDS in Rural and Urban Acute Care Settings. This project aimed at identifying personal characteristics of nurses, their attitudes about AIDS, experience of jobstress, willingness to care for patients with AIDS, and practice of universal precautions in rural and urban care settings also examined the rural-urban differences in the relationship of nurse's attitudes about AIDS and their experience with jobstress. *(NERCRD)*

Teens in Our Communities: Community Assessment of Teen Needs in the Northeast. Educators from Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire worked collaboratively with youth, school, and community leaders to survey junior and senior high school students in five targeted school districts. Five educational newsletters on the identified youth priority issues were used to increase parent awareness of teen concerns. This will be useful in designing future programming to protect teens against risks and in helping them to build their economic, leadership, and personal skills. *(NERCRD)*

Leadership is a learned skill.

Goal 4: To Assist in Family and Community Adjustments to Stress and Change
Southern Rural Development Center

The Black Belt of the Rural South: Dependence, Persistence and Policy examines by race the extent of dependency and its relationship to patterns of education, poverty and employment. It also examines changes in these patterns and raises policy questions and implications of these conditions in a document to be prepared for widespread distribution. *(SRDC)*

Entrepreneurial and Technical Skill Development of Female Welfare Recipients provides an educational opportunity in the areas of apparel alteration and home maintenance for women who want to get off of government assistance programs. A model is being developed and tested in Mississippi for entrepreneurial and technical skill development of welfare recipients that may be expanded to additional counties in the state, region, and country. The model may be adapted and used with all types of home-based businesses. *(SRDC)*

Environmental Assessment and Development of Strategies for Enhancing the Independence of the Rural Elderly and Their Ability To Age in Place studied the housing environment of elderly persons living in rural communities in Louisiana to determine environmental conditions of these elderly and what features in their homes are likely to enhance or inhibit their ability to age in place. *(SRDC)*

Health Care Reform Issues was a nationwide video conference downlinked to county agents and extension staffs at more than 400 sites in 43 states. The conference informed the agents of the basics of health care reform and included a review of nationally-produced materials on the subject plus a discussion of the role of education versus advocacy in health care education. *(SRDC)*

Measuring the Importance of the Health Care Sector on a Rural Economy will be a guidebook summarizing the relationship between economic development and industrial growth and the relationship between economic development and retirement growth. It also will demonstrate the importance of the health sector to the local economy and develop a methodology extension workers can apply to local community health care systems. *(SRDC)*

Resource Directory — Rural Health and Safety is a project to develop and distribute a resource directory listing individuals with expertise in the areas of rural health and safety. The directory will include selected university personnel and others in each state who are recognized for their knowledge in rural health and safety. *(SRDC)*

Goal 4: To Assist in Family and Community Adjustments to Stress and Change
Western Rural Development Center

Coping with Change (formerly Coping with Growth). A popular Western Center training program from the late 1970's called Coping with Growth resulted in a series of 14 publications whose subject matter has never become irrelevant. The issues and strategies have been found to be just as successful whether a community is growing rapidly or suffering economic decline. The first three revisions, *Public Policy Education, Population Change, and Economic Impact Assessment*, are currently available. *(WRDC)*

The National Rural Studies Committee has supported the development of a small cadre of scholars who are working on rural issues. This year's Center Associate explored implications of solid waste management for rural communities. Last summer, the Committee held a training institute for young scholars to further its overall objective of motivating more researchers from diverse fields to consider rural issues. The Committee is producing a book on rural America, *The American Countryside: Rural People and Places*. Twenty six papers prepared by Committee members and invited experts address topics in the following categories: literature and the countryside, change in the countryside, money and jobs, distress and poverty, regional and ethnic diversity, and the social and institutional context for group decision making in the countryside. An introduction and concluding summary will be furnished by Emery Castle, chair of the National Rural Studies Committee. *(WRDC)*

Rising Importance of Latino Immigration, Families and Communities in the Rural West. A group of researchers from around the region will produce a series of educational materials to educate rural workers (extension agents, rural commissioners, educators, etc.) about Latino issues and needs. Initial titles include: ***Rural Latinos: Issues of Identity, Latinos in the West: Rural Communities in Transition, The Mexicanization of Agriculture: Expanded Labor Demand, Hispano Farmers and Sustainable Agriculture: Traditions and Cultural Practices in the Rockies***, and ***Women, Children and the Health Needs of Rural Latinos***. The group also will organize a conference and write an edited volume. *(WRDC)*

Rural Health. The Western Center facilitated the participation of Extension personnel from 10 states in the Western Region at two conferences on health care reform organized by the USDA/ES Decisions for Health national initiative. Funds were provided by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. *(WRDC)*

Goal 4: To Assist in Family and Community Adjustments to Stress and Change
Completed Projects Highlights:

Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

Parenting Education: An Innovative Approach to Dealing with Parenting. The Parenting Education Program is continuing to provide workshops in an attempt to break the viscous cycles of child abuse plaguing our society. Using a low-literacy resource notebook developed by an Extension family living agent, the ten-week educational workshops require abusive parents to examine different discipline styles, while offering positive alternatives to negative techniques. Attendance in the program's workshops resulted from court mandates and referrals from Children and Youth Services. This project has greatly influenced court placement and the reunion of children with their biological parents in their home environments.

Currently a spin-off project of The Parenting Education Program is locally in the works, which will allow foster parents to act as mentors for children's biological parents. Although this project will take longer to get implemented across the board, it already has several foster members on line.

The Parenting Education Program also is expanding to reach incarcerated male youths. With the option to return to the workshop every week, males attending the classes had a 95% return rate during the final four weeks of the program. An overall positive response to the program was indicative of their reflective nature on their parenting style and generated possible alternative solutions to help them change. *(NERCRD)*

Prenatal Health Care Access in the Rural Northeast: A Policy Analysis. With information obtained from their Northeast Center-sponsored project, faculty from West Virginia University and the University of Maine are working towards policy development to improve the quality of life of rural infants. In researching perinatal and prenatal health care in rural areas, researchers discovered that children are often born with a low birth weight, which seriously hinders their ability to see, hear, and speak before they ever leave the womb. Moreover, not only is this detrimental to the infants well-being, but it also is costing the United States health care system millions of dollars per year. A preliminary report on the Northeast Center-funded study stated that "low birth weight is a major contributor to infant deaths; the lower a baby's weight at birth, the more likely the baby will have vision, hearing, and speech problems, *and learning disabilities*." As of 1990, reported average hospital costs for normal birth weight infants equaled $3,000, while the cost for low birth weight infants could soar to $100,000.

The researchers could not have attained all the data they needed for their study without one essential tool—PRAMS, or the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System. This computer system allowed them to analyze data with the Centers for Disease Control in 13 states, to create a mathematical model for the impact on neonatal mortality, and gather 30,000 observations on the effects of low birth weight on babies. With the help of hospitals in West Virginia and Maine, the researchers were able to access information on births at the hospitals, which they used to draw parallels and conclusions. The essential information for this research was not only statistics on the newborn babies, but also on the health care practices of their parents.

One researcher used a hands-on approach by going into the homes of several families in West Virginia, in an attempt to get to the root of the problem. She discovered that 40% of the women didn't intend to become pregnant, and that teenage pregnancy was extremely prevalent. Another researcher stated that, "most of the women we found to be at the highest risk were either young or old, because they receive the least care. One of the reasons this occurs in older women is that they may become pregnant and not realize it, thinking that the changes they are experiencing are part of menopause. By the time they realize that they are pregnant, it could be four or five months, and they haven't received any prenatal health care."

"We've offered our ideas and guidance, and much of the information they need is simply educational. We wouldn't have been able to do this without the [Northeast Center] funding that allowed us to discover PRAMS."

The researchers found that many of the women did not understand the consequences of giving birth to a low-birth-weight infant and that they actually see it as an easier way to give birth, so they don't think of it as a problem. Many of these women also smoked and consumed alcohol while pregnant, and in many cases were in total denial of the problem, even when Fetal Alcohol Syndrome was detected at the hospital at the time of birth. Drug use and abuse are seen as outlets of pleasure by many of the women, and not outlets that they are willing to give up readily just because they are pregnant.

The father's negative attitude towards health care offered by male physicians was another factor which hindered women's ability to access quality health care. One researcher stated, *"I found that many of the fathers simply don't feel comfortable taking their wives to male physicians. They are skeptical of them and will influence them not to go simply because they don't trust them."* There also are so few doctors in most of the rural areas that there isn't always a choice to go to a female physician. The lack of physicians and the demographics of health care facilities adds another obstacle to expectant mothers—even if an expectant mother is educated enough to know prenatal care is necessary, will she be able to access it?

The researchers are concentrating on proving how changes in health policies could be translated into dollar savings by working with the Maine Health Care Finance Commission and by providing their results to hospitals and reporting their findings in policy and campus journals. The researchers believe their findings "will greatly enhance the capabilities of the West Virginia Office of Maternal and Child Health, which *also uses the PRAMS system. We've offered our ideas and guidance, and much of the information they need is simply educational. We wouldn't have been able to do this without the [Northeast Center] funding that allowed us to discover PRAMS."* The researchers are trying to reach public policy makers with their findings. One researcher stated, "the best is yet to come. *Policy improvement is what we're trying to work on. We want to build a model for prenatal care."*

Through the PRAMS system and the information collected by our researchers, a new system was devised to combat the problem of women who simply could not access prenatal health care because of demographics. What this program does is provide transportation or money for transportation to expectant mothers, so they will more readily engage in prenatal health care. The program director for Family Outreach programs at the West Virginia Office of Maternal and Child Health, told me, *"We started out with grant money from private foundations, such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Then we contacted organizations such as 'Right from the Start' which helped us work directly with hospitals and clinics to link high-risk, Medicaid-receiving pregnant women to health care facilities."* These agencies give expectant mothers 28 1/2 cents per mile if they had their own transportation or someone else who could drive them, or they will provide bus or taxi fare as a last resort. The money from this project actually replenishes itself, because it starts out in a program such as *Right from the Start*, goes to the client, then the health care provider, and finally ends us back in a human service agency, and has probably generated up to $30,000 by now. *"What started out as a pilot project in 7 counties in West Virginia in 1991 is now in 48 counties and is still growing, hopefully through the entire state."* The program director said, *"Results of studies like the Northeast Center-funded study have helped show that transportation is a real barrier to rural residents receiving health care."*

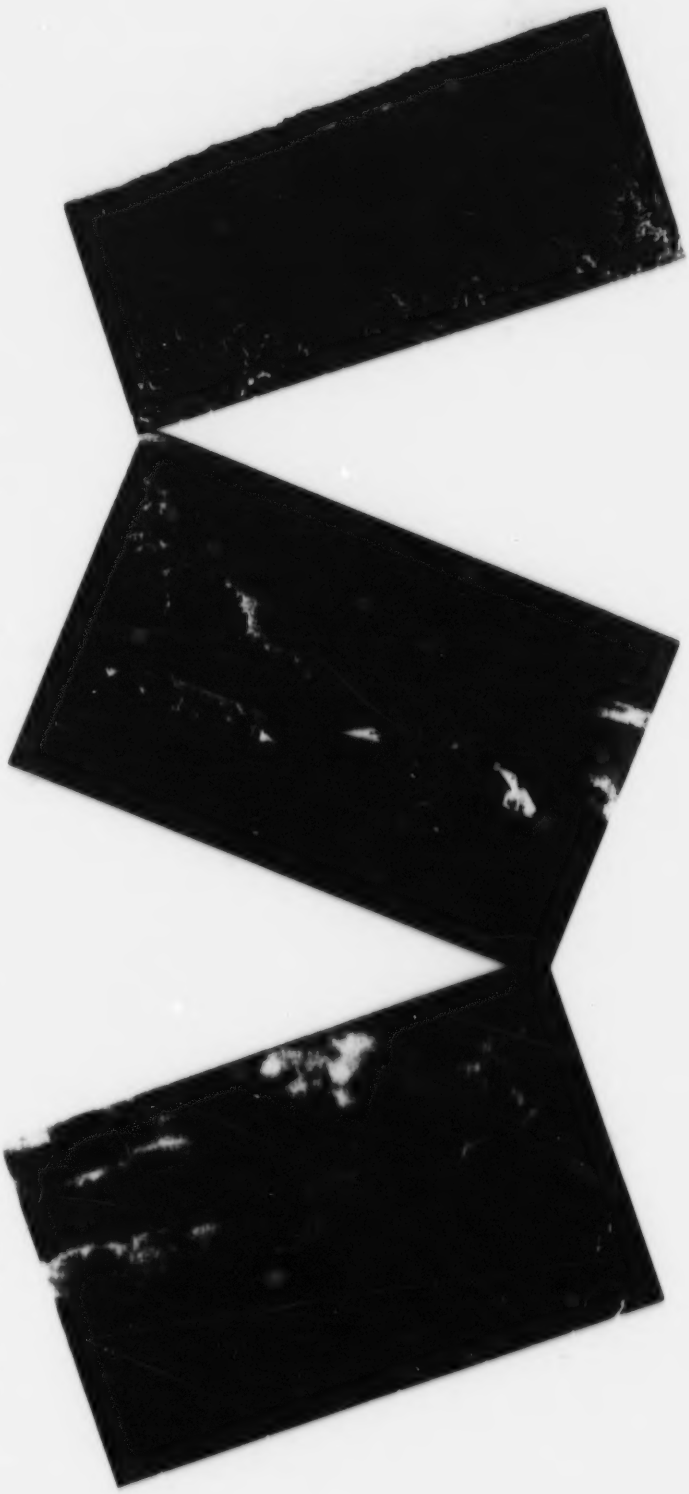
This program is only the beginning of many that the researchers hope to see and are actively working towards through conferences, journals, and by teaching at their respective universities. Although the Northeast Center-funded study, *Prenatal Health Care Access in the Rural Northeast: A Policy Analysis*, ended in 1993, the project "opened up many doors" for the researchers and kept them focused on the issue, to dig deeper into the ramifications of low birth weight babies on society. *PRAMS has allowed me to focus on state policy-makers, who are the ones who will take necessary measures to change the current situation."*

One exciting and reasonable possibility for improvement would be to implement the use of home nurses for expectant mothers in rural areas. Kimbra Mascilak, R.N. who works at Henrico Doctors Hospital in Richmond, Virginia, who has seen the results of women who haven't received proper prenatal health care. *"These women may deliver babies with severe deformities due to their ignorance of the problem, and may not realize that everything they've consumed during the pregnancy has a direct effect on their child. When we question what they've been eating or drinking or if they've been smoking or doing drugs, they may answer us untruthfully, and we can't always tell what is really happening. To assure that they are following the proper health habits, a visiting nurse needs to go into their home to make sure there is nutritious food on their shelves and to see how their home environment will affect that unborn child."*

One researcher stated, *"it is extremely necessary for rural health nurses to go into the homes to see exactly what peoples' living conditions are. I think that even women who aren't nurses could be trained in prenatal health care practices to help these women. If there were older women who were respected in these small communities who were willing to do it, it would combat the problem that many families are extremely protective and aren't always open to outside help."* Fatherhood education would also be a big help. If there is support from all angles, an expectant mother is more encouraged to seek care. *(NERCRD)*

Southern Rural Development Center

Minority adults and youth in east Texas and western Arkansas are the most underemployed and unemployed population groups in those two areas. Thanks to a grant from the Southern Rural Development Center and materials developed with that grant, many minority adults and youth have someone to turn to for help. A grant to the Texas Agricultural Extension Service supported a project to instill job skills in unemployed or underemployed workers. Data from four counties indicated between 20 and 25 percent of the participants found jobs and about 80 percent improved job skills. *(SRDC)*



Goal 5: To Promote Constructive Use of the Environment

If the quantity and quality of natural resources are to be maintained for current and multi-future uses, rural society must change from a traditional approach of management and use to a more holistic perspective, one that is guided by and in tune with a multi-objective approach. This approach must accommodate the differing objectives of rural resource owners, residents, urban dwellers, and the general public who rely on rural land, air, and water resources for sustenance, recreation, and aesthetics. Rural society must shift toward constructive use of their resources, incorporating current production uses with regeneration and preservation practices for future generations. This change will require an adjustment from single-use practices to more multiple-use strategies. Applied research and extension programs will factor into environmental issues resolution both positive and negative influences such as demographics, economic, social, aethsetic, and political variables as programs are formulated and activated to assist decision makers who grapple with these public issues.

Goal 5: To Promote Constructive Use of the Environment
North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

Economic Impacts of the Conservation Reserve Program on Rural Communities in the North Central Region. Economic impacts of the Conservation Reserve Program have previously been studied at the state or county level using primarily input-output analysis. This project will study the impacts at the community level to identify changes in local spending patterns, employment and population levels in towns since the enactment of the Conservation Reserve Program. Data will be collected from existing sources like the Bureau of Economic Analysis, and via survey to Conservation Reserve Program-enrolled landowners and local businesses in the selected towns. The results of this study will give rural development experts more information regarding the community impacts of this program so that policy recommendations can be made to better serve rural communities. *(NCRCRD)*

An Integrated Solution to Marginal Land Farming: Use of Farms, Value-Added Industries, and Power Utilities for Rural Development. The North Central Center has provided seed money to develop an integrated network among the various producer-user sectors in the North Central agricultural landscape. Specific rural problems to be addressed include farm sustainability, value-added industry waste, and utility energy production and on-farm consumption. The project team includes biologists and economists working with Frito-Lay, the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (a prototype utility), and the Indiana State Association of Rural Electric Membership Corporations. *(NCRCRD)*

Livestock Production for Sustainable Rural Communities. The past two years (1993-1994) have been marked by events and intense debates among and between farmers, rural residents, local environmental groups, agricultural leaders, government officials, policy makers, and academics concerning the proliferation and concentration of large-scale swine production facilities in various regions of the U.S. Underlying these debates are basic questions concerning the consequences of large scale swine production and related technology for the sustainability of family farm pork production, the environment, farmer health, and the viability of rural communities. There is a widely recognized need for assembling and integrating independent and current scientific knowledge in each of these areas and distributing that information. In response to this need, The Institute of Agricultural Medicine and Occupational Health at the University of Iowa and the North Central Center are initiating a two-part process to bring information to interested parties to assist them in decision making and policy formation. The first was a conference held in Kansas City, October 28-30, 1994, to assemble information from farm and rural citizen groups and communities (also co-sponsored by the Center for Rural Affairs). This conference formulated grassroot concerns and questions to be addressed in a second follow-up working scientific conference on June 29-30, 1995, in Des Moines, Iowa. *(NCRCRD)*

Protecting Rural America's Water Resources: Partnerships for Pollution Solutions. Members of the agricultural and environmental communities met at a symposium in Washington, D.C. on October 23-26, 1994, to discuss possible solutions to surface water and ground water pollution problems. The symposium titled *Protecting Rural America's Water Resources: Partnerships for Pollution Solutions* brought together leaders in the agriculture industry, producer groups, public agencies and environmental groups. Nineteen organizations, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development sponsored the symposium. Discussions held during the symposium stressed the fact that state and federal agencies and the regulated community needed to work together as partners in order to keep water supplies safe from agricultural pollution. *(NCRCRD)*

Situational and Personal Factors in Household Waste Management: The Impacts of Regulations, Markets, Resources and Attitudes. Developing effective strategies to manage the increasing volume of waste is a problem for local and state officials, rural and urban planners, and environmentalists. The purpose of this project is to address that problem by identifying the effects of differences in regulations, attitudes, resources and market constraints in five North Central states on residential waste management practices and on intentions to engage in source reduction practices. The project results will increase understanding of the human resource considerations in managing residential waste, and provide information for public policy decision-makers and educators. With rural participants as research subjects and as program recipients, this project addresses one of the major issues facing rural communities—the management and funding of waste disposal and management processes. *(NCRCRD)*

Goal 5: To Promote Constructive Use of the Environment
Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

Agriculture and Development Planning on the Rural/Urban Fringe. The first year objectives of this research project involved cataloging existing programs that directly or indirectly impact agricultural retention in the Northeast and evaluating the comprehensiveness and overall success of

these programs. The second year was devoted to disseminating this information to public sector planners, policy makers, and Cooperative Extension Community Development personnel in northeastern Metropolitan Statistical Areas. *(NERCRD)*

Forest Stewardship Education Modules: Increasing Knowledge and Reducing Conflict. Responsible forest management depends on providing consistent and accurate information to three principal audiences: non-industrial private forest landowners, the general public, and public officials. Educational materials will be developed and directed at target audiences so they will understand the importance of implementing management practices and guidelines to ensure long-term sustainability of commodity and non-commodity forest resources; help insure long-term viability of forest-based industry as a vital component of rural economies; and help avoid urban development and subsequent forest fragmentation precipitated solely by the economic pressures of taxation. *(NERCRD)*

*Home*A*Syst.* The Northeast Center conducted two workshops to familiarize federal, state, and extension personnel with the Home*A*Syst environmental assessment program. This program is designed to provide rural residents with the means to identify and prevent groundwater contamination by various sources in the household. A variety of management technologies and methods were discussed in the workshops. The first workshop was held at the USDA Forest Service Headquarters in Durham, New Hampshire. State and extension personnel of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, who were in attendance, formed strong partnerships and decided to cooperatively pursue the potentials of *Home*A*Syst* in their respective regions. The second workshop was conducted at the University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware. Extension personnel from New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Delaware, and Maryland attended. The workshops were conducted primarily by *Farm*A*Syst* national staff. A representative of the Soil Conservation Service--Northeast National Technical Center and a representative of the Northeast Center served as moderators and site coordinators. *(NERCRD)*

The Impact of Hazardous Waste Transportation on Rural Society. The purpose of this study is to provide rural and small town residents and local officials of both Pennsylvania and Vermont with a better understanding of the current movements, impacts, modes of transportation, and local attitudes toward handling of hazardous wastes. Another objective of the study was to indicate where accidents involving hazardous materials are likely to occur. *(NERCRD)*

Watershed Leadership Workshop. A two-day workshop will be held in which implementable ideas will be discussed concerning the protection of watershed values and mitigation of nonpoint source pollution within a target area focused on the lower Delaware River basin. The first day of the workshop presentations will be oriented towards municipalities, and, the second day, will be oriented towards the general public and community group leaders. *(NERCRD)*

Goal 5: To Promote Constructive Use of the Environment
Southern Rural Development Center

Evaluation of Existing Decision Aids for Local Solid Waste Management Planning is a project to identify, obtain and catalogue existing decision aids for local solid waste management in rural areas. Other objectives include developing criteria for judging strengths and weaknesses of the decision aids, evaluating the aids and summarizing and publishing the findings. *(SRDC)*

*Home*A*Syst* is an environmental assessment program. The Southern Rural Development Center coordinated a workshop in Atlanta to familiarize personnel with the program. *Home*A*Syst* helps rural residents identify and prevent groundwater contamination from various sources in the household. *(SRDC)*

Institutional Structure Influences on Progress in Water Quality Management Across Southern States is a study of selected state institutional structures for citizens and policy makers, specifically non-point source and ground water protection policies. Attention is focused on the definition and role of institutions in water quality management. *(SRDC)*

Goal 5: To Promote Constructive Use of the Environment
Western Rural Development Center

North West Service Academy. The Western Center administers a National Service Corps program in Washington and Oregon through a grant from the Commission on National and Community Service Subtitle D. Collaborators on the project include local communities, school districts, community colleges, local and state agencies, Educational Service Districts, and the U.S. Forest Service. The program targets 100 young adults (ages 18 and over) from one rural and one urban service area for a year-long program of service, education, and leadership training. The goal is to form a corps of informed, active young adults trained and committed to addressing environmental and community concerns of a regional and/or national nature.

The service learning opportunities primarily are environmental projects on Forest Service land and within local communities that cannot currently be addressed without a significant expansion of volunteer efforts. Through working on these environmental projects, the Academy members not only help improve Forest Service facilities and community areas, but also learn about conservation practices that lead to sustainable use of natural resources. The program demonstrates a means for states, local government, private non-profit organizations, business and the federal government to collaborate to improve the opportunities of a diverse population of rural and urban adults. The Academy creates new leaders and role models engaged in life-long service projects within Columbia Gorge communities and will enable members to expand their career options. *(WRDC)*

Public Lands. The Western Center funded an Impacts and Alternatives working session to produce a detailed research and extension proposal with the following goals: (1) to produce a set of impact methodologies useful in states and communities across the West, (2) to adapt existing Western Center education and training programs (e.g., environmental conflict resolution, strategic planning, business retention and expansion, and tourism) to focus on public land issues, (3) to create a method applicable to communities throughout the West for tracking the implementation of impact assessment and alternative identification/evaluation processes.

The principal investigators played primary roles in last year's National Public Policy session on Public Lands in Reno. They identified priority issues for a follow-up meeting of over 25 from diverse public and private sector agencies to take place in January 1995 to share current research on public land use planning and impact assessment methodologies. A subset of this January group will take on the task of writing the proposal for funding to implement the full research and outreach agenda to achieve the listed goals. *(WRDC)*

The Role of Water on Indian Reservations. "Cheap Water in Indian Country: A Cost-Effective Rural Development Tool?" by Robert A. Young and Roger Mann in *Indian Water in the New West*, The University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1993.

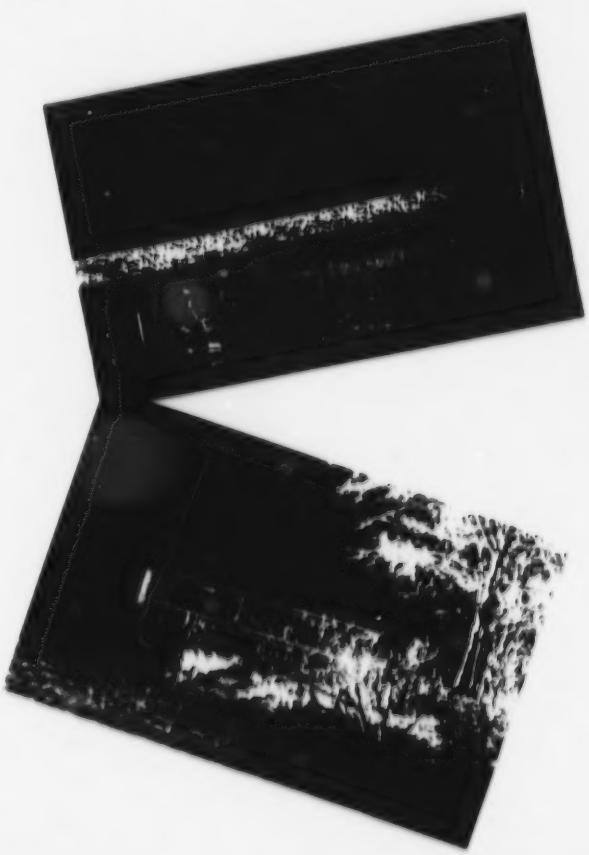
According to this study, "A public subsidy policy for irrigation made sense in an era when food supplies were often inadequate, when the agricultural economy was such that agricultural development was an effective mechanism for regional economic growth, and when settling empty spaces was an important policy goal.

"At the end of the twentieth century, however, events and technology have made obsolete these benefits of the irrigation subsidy policy. Public funds would be much more effectively spent for 'people' rather than for 'places.' In particular, resources should be directed toward increased training and education to help Native Americans enter the work force in the twenty-first century and toward institutions designed to encourage employment opportunities in industrial and service industries." *(WRDC)*

Goal 5: To Promote Constructive Use of the Environment
Completed Project Highlights:

Southern Rural Development Center

After the DeSoto County (Mississippi) Extension staff conducted extensive home composting demonstrations and provided wire composting bins with instructions and starter, curbside disposal of yard waste decreased 51 percent. The home composting program and other solid waste management efforts in DeSoto County are the result of expertise and educational opportunities initially made available by the Southern Rural Development Center. Out of a budget of $21 million, DeSoto County government spends more than $2 million a year for waste disposal. Educating residents to manage their trash and reduce the waste stream is an important way to keep those costs down. *(SRDC)*



Collaborating Agencies

AgriBank FCB; Agricultural Retailers Association; American Crop Protection Association; American Farm Bureau Federation; American Farmland Trust/Center for Agriculture in the Environment; American Petroleum Institute; Bureau of Land Management; Center for Rural Revitalization, University of Nebraska—Lincoln; Community and Rural Development Institute, Cornell University; Conservation Technology Information Center; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service—USDA; Economic Development Agency; Economic Research Service—USDA; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Federal Office of Rural Health Policy; The Fertilizer Institute; Frito-Lay; Ground Water Protection Council; USEPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water; Dairyland System of Electric Cooperatives; Farm Foundation; U. S. Forest Service; The Indiana State Association of REMCs; Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Infrastructure Center, University of Nebraska—Omaha; Groundwater Protection Council; The Institute of Agricultural Medicine and Occupational Health at the University of Iowa; Iowa Department of Elder Affairs Housing Committee; Kansas University Transportation Center; Minnesota Department of Transportation; University of Minnesota Tourism Center; National Association of Conservation Districts; National Farm*A*Syst Program; National Rural Water Association; Nebraska Rural Development Commission; Northern Indiana Public Service Company; Rural Development Administration; Rural Policy Research Institute; US Soil Conservation Service; State Rural Development Councils; US West Foundation; Tennessee Valley Authority; the W. K. Kellogg Foundation; USDA—Working Group on Water Quality.

Supporting Land-Grant Universities

North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

University of Illinois, Iowa State University, Kansas State University, Lincoln University, Michigan State University, University of Minnesota, University of Missouri, University of Nebraska, North Dakota State University, The Ohio State University, Purdue University, South Dakota State University, and the University of Wisconsin.

Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

University of Connecticut, University of Delaware, Delaware State University, University of the District of Columbia, University of Maine, University of Maryland—College Park, University of Maryland—Eastern Shore, University of Massachusetts, University of New Hampshire, Rutgers—The State University of New Jersey, Cornell University, The Pennsylvania State University, University of Rhode Island, University of Vermont, and West Virginia University.

Southern Rural Development Center

Alabama A&M University, Alcorn State University, University of Arkansas, University of Arkansas—Pine Bluff, Auburn University, Clemson University, Florida A&M University, University of Florida, Fort Valley State College, University of Georgia, Kentucky State University, University of Kentucky, Langston University, Louisiana State University, Mississippi State University, North Carolina A&T State University, North Carolina State University, Oklahoma State University, Prairie View A&M University, University of Puerto Rico, South Carolina State, Southern University, Tennessee State University, University of Tennessee, Texas A&M University, Tuskegee University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Virginia State University, and the University of the Virgin Islands.

Western Rural Development Center

University of Alaska, University of Arizona, University of California, Colorado State University, University of Guam, University of Hawaii, University of Idaho, Montana State University, University of Nevada—Reno, New Mexico State University, Oregon State University, Utah State University, Washington State University, and University of Wyoming.

Four Rural Development Regions